5/8/61

he shd I have said about Having I wish to convey that I dont think our Government could have with propriety acted differently from what they have done — that we are not to be judged by the tone of some of our newspapers which are sometimes mistaken, sometimes ignorant, sometimes venal; that the mass of our people, having no interest in slavery, and naturally abhorring it, are much more disposed against it than in its favour; and that if the English feeling were much more decidedly proslavery than it can, in my opinion, be justly said to be, this might be fairly ascribed to the fact that at least nine tenths of the American visitors to England (the literary men, the planters, the merchants & wealthy manufacturers) are either openly pro-slavery or sympathetic to the system. I have always contended that one of the chief reasons for maintaining an anti-slavery effort here was the necessity of to counteract if possible this most powerful proslavery influence — far more potent than that of American papers, which are comparatively little read by the majority of our middle classes.

a friend of mine, a merchant of great respectability
in dependence of recent & general intelligence in
remarking on the manner which may be fairly given
for the sympathy being felt for the party in the
struggles known of his acquaintance there

1st That correctly or not, we have formed the opinion
that the sentiments in those parts are said on two things to
be combined, & therefore we regard the war as waged

2nd That Americans in contemplating the probability of
success on the part of the South we do not think this
can only be attained by complete surrender to the
South as regards slavery from the part we feel
of the only party in the Northern States we feel con-
vinced that if there was any chance of conciliating
the South & restoring them to the Union the Northern
States would be willing to give them the strongest
guarantee for the preservation of their peculiar in-
stitutions.

3rd We have no the slightest sympathy with slavery
however, but we have no confidence in their
recent allies

Therefore on my decision the welfare of the colored
people, the continuation of slavery we look for a
speedy termination of the war the restoration of the
Slave States on the same most likely to promote
their objects — thus feeling the matter from the
cause of slavery strictly & for alone for the
benefit of their unfortunate institutions

With respect to H. Martineau I admit that she has a "hoity toity" ex cathedra style which is either laughable or vexatious according to the reader's mood. But considering her physical deficiencies & infirmities & her feeble health, there is something very grand in the action on the whole of her extraordinary faculties & it cannot be denied that in 9 cases out of 10 she devotes them to great & good objects. If the English people are not as right as could be wished, and Slavery exists, it is not her fault — for no one else has done so much effectual work of this kind — as, not any other half dozen Labourers in the same field. Living abroad myself & reading both reviews as the least I seem to myself to do, I can excuse a good deal of petulance & vanity by which she has to me on two occasions inflicted injuries on myself and to better people than I am. I regard it as a great testimony to her true nobility of character that the eagle eyed Yankee has such a high opinion of her moral, as she must have of her amazing intellectual ability. From what I have seen of her in private, I suspect that, considering she is one of the most remarkable women that ever lived, she bears herself with great simplicity & freedom from affectation. I am now in town & this is the cause of my first letter being different to the rest of my letters.

25/8/61

The paper best known in England is the New York Herald & as the best American newspaper are very little known at home. It is no wonder that we should be so perfectly informed about the unpopular ends, knowing them to be known by the majority of English readers. As to England itself there is doubtless a large class - powerful & wealthy to be in the cotton supply & on the wealth of which. This has always been to what they should be privileged in the world. They are chiefly the merchants of Liverpool & the manufacturing districts generally, have probably no great love for the United States as a republic. I have thought it worthy to note that the English have less than Americans the vocations of circumstances. The majority of English Americans would undoubtedly call Englishmen — slaves to circumstances without claiming any higher virtue for them. I think it likely that the majority of the English middle classes are as much to slavery as any people in the world. It is not much fair to judge them by the Times than it would be to judge Europe by the Herald — & when people educated & native to the Americans it is often forgotten that the sentiments expressed in print are merely those of an unscrupulous advocate to the class of public writers who are probably as venal & corrupt as any in the community.

88

M.A.9.2.30.75

Except by my wife your letter has been seen
& read to seen by nobody – but I read to a friend
of mine who is an clearheaded & of an judicial
mind as any one I know any where in
pursuit of that end in which for the sake of the
unfavorable sentiment of all classes of American
about England. He was greatly amused & said
he did not know there was any thing the ma-
jority of Englishmen so much wished for America
as the existence of slavery – Utter to the best of
my knowledge & belief is the simple truth – nor
have I seen any thing on the part of the nation
that would lead me to a contrary opinion.
Indeed the old story of the Two Knights stone should
seem to be revived in fact in the strange
divergency of opinion between the two nations.
They are both amused at each other that the one is
not of the other way of thinking when points on
which neither has sufficient materials to form
a just opinion to his mind precludes and
perfectly entitles to have a calm & correct
judgment on either side. My own opinion is
that the predominancy in country of the South & the
character of the Southern Country would render
their complete subjection by any army a matter
of immense cost & difficulty & the general
persuasion here is that a army of volunteers
unbenefitted officered are not the best for such
a service. You remember that until there
was begun the warmest admiration of the abolitionists

war for his whole with Slaveholders & that they thought if they could overthrow Slavery & deliverance of Southern support ~~from~~ and behavior on the Slaves would speedily die out. The consummation seems likely to take place as soon with sea by the Yankees & Slaves coming in the Rebel Island along with the Rebels. This is what the abolitionists are hoping with the fleet & army & would such a proclamation of universal liberty as ought to be likely (if any thing can) to cut the ground from under the feet of the Slaveholders.

With respect to Harriet Martineau the lives ~~of~~ ~~two~~ ~~ladies~~ ~~with~~ ~~a~~ ~~niece~~ ~~who~~ ~~watches~~ ~~her~~ ~~nearly~~ ~~seeing~~ ~~any~~ ~~one~~ ~~else~~ ~~can~~ ~~be~~ ~~admitted~~, who hasten to her. There is no chance to ~~relate~~, I regret her with her great talents & self esteem & almost inevitably erroneous & doctrinal & too apt to write on doctrine to be an agreeable & edifying correspondent. However how greatly these islands have prospered with the purpose of protracting the Rebellion & to point too much & give it an importance which is not really ~~due~~ ~~to~~ ~~them~~ efforts, thoughts & resolutions have been so long engaged in a hand to hand struggle with the such a tremendous national evil as Slavery.

I do not know whether you have heard that my wife & I spent some weeks lately (in our leisure hours) preparing a book for Messrs Brown founded on Newspaper Life & other materials contained in American publications. It has just been published by Smith, Elder & Co (Miss Bronte's publishers) & makes a comely volume of about 450 pages. As soon as I am quite sure by a line or a hemb shoot from you that you are the Happy Possessor of the Rue de Seine Edition Lord & Taylor's Library. I am sure Edwin must be glad to be back in France & I hope the rest of Septr & Oct. will greatly benefit your brother William. Parkinson Baths are also the Waters here for the cure of many forms of disease & Dr Barter's Establishments at Blarney, near Cork, is resorted to from far and near by invalids, some of whom are cured in a way little less than miraculous. To hear some of the enthusiastic admirers of the Castle table d'hôte, you would think it could cure all the ills that flesh is heir to.

With kind regards to all Yours truly

I am ever Your affect Friend

Richd Grant White

MS. A.9.2.30.75

Dublin 25 Aug 1861

With respect to American affairs as far as England is to be regarded in connexion with them I cannot help thinking that judgment has been quite correct. The anger expressed by the American press at the attitude of England when the war began and the unjustifiable encouragement which was thereby given to the Secessionists was just what it should have been. There is, as far as I know, the unanimous sentiment here. What he objects to is the absence of sympathy with the various incidents of an anti Slavery tendency which have taken place in the course of proceedings & other incidental matters which have not been the acts of the government or could not be gathered from the general tenor of the newspapers, which therefore could not be known or appreciated in England except by the readers of anti Slavery newspapers. Up to a very late period the course of the government & of the leaders of the army have been carefully restrained by a regard for the compromises of the Constitution with a view to the restoration of the Union with the Slave States. That the tendency of events has been towards the overthrow of the Slave system is clear to abolitionists - but, as far as could be judged from the official language, this was by no means an end to be aimed at.

woman of respectable family – a great granddaughter of Edmund Burke's friend & school fellow Richard Burke Shackleton. She is a good housekeeper, so natured, kind hearted & the affection between the young pair has been of many years duration. The match has the best elements of future happiness in the good dispositions of both parties & in the circumstance that they are both generally liked, trusted & respected. There is a prosaic view of putting it, but I could have probably written in different terms if I had had this same story to tell Thackeray years ago. Mary Anne is with me & sends her love in return & I hope to have more letters for that in the country, as I would be sorry to be the first to take care that our mutual friends – for he is very fond of her – forget us.

Our country place is rather thoroughly rural & as pretty a place of its sort pretension as any in the country within the same distance of Dublin. If I were not the happy dupe dependent on the fluctuations of business which owing to political & other causes we dwellers have no control have been exceedingly depressed for the last year & more, I would have the true enjoyment that wealthy ease can confer when a man who is neither wealthy, ambitious nor ostentatious & who is by this time pretty fully convinced how foolish it is to ruin himself for the sake of cutting a figure among his acquaintances.

Ms. N.L.I. 2.30.76